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Big boost for Social Security benefits as inflation rises

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Millions of retirees on Social Security will get a 5.9% boost in benefits for 2022. The biggest cost-of-living adjustment in 39 years follows a burst in inflation as the economy struggles to shake off the drag of the coronavirus pandemic. The COLA, as it's commonly called, amounts to \$92 a month for the average retired worker, according to estimates released Wednesday by the Social Security Administration. That marks an abrupt break from a long lull in inflation that saw cost-of-living adjustments averaging just 1.65% a year over the past 10 years.

With the increase, the estimated average Social

Security payment for a retired worker will be \$1,657 a month next year. A typical couple's benefits would rise by \$154 to \$2,753 per month.

But that's just to help make up for rising costs that recipients are already paying for food, gasoline and other goods and services.

—

"It goes pretty quickly," retiree Cliff Rumsey said of the cost-of-living increases he's seen. After a career in sales for a leading steel manufacturer, Rumsey lives near Hilton Head Island, South Carolina.

He cares at home for his wife of nearly 60 years, Judy, who has advanced Alzheimer's disease.

Continued on next page



This Tuesday, Oct. 12, 2021, photo shows a Social Security card in Tigard, Ore.

Associated Press

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Continued from Front

Since the coronavirus pandemic, Rumsey said he has also noted price increases for wages paid to caregivers who occasionally spell him and for personal care products for Judy.

The COLA affects household budgets for about 1 in 5 Americans. That includes Social Security recipients, disabled veterans and federal retirees, nearly 70 million people in all. For baby boomers who embarked on retirement within the past 15 years, it will be the biggest increase they've seen.

Among them is Kitty Ruderman of Queens in New York City, who retired from



In this Dec. 21, 2020, file photo people watch as the sun sets from the Presidio in San Francisco.

Associated Press

a career as an executive assistant and has been collecting Social Security for about 10 years. "We wait

to hear every year what the increase is going to be, and every year it's been so insignificant," she said. "This

year, thank goodness, it will make a difference."

Ruderman says she times her grocery shopping to take advantage of mid-week senior citizen discounts, but even so price hikes have been "extreme." She says she doesn't think she can afford a medication that her doctor has recommended.

AARP CEO Jo Ann Jenkins called the government payout increase "crucial for Social Security beneficiaries and their families as they try to keep up with rising costs."

Policymakers say the COLA was designed as a safeguard to protect Social Security benefits against the loss of purchasing power, and not a pay bump for retirees. About half of seniors live in households where Social Security benefits provide at least 50% of their income, and one-quarter rely on their monthly payment for all or nearly all their income.

"Regardless of the size of the COLA, you never want to minimize the importance of the COLA," said retirement policy expert Charles Blahous, a former public trustee helping to oversee Social Security and Medicare finances. "What people are able to purchase is very profoundly affected by the number that comes out. We are talking the necessities of living in many cases."

This year's Social Security trustees report amplified warnings about the long-range financial stability of the program, but there's little talk about fixes in Congress with lawmakers' attention consumed by President Joe Biden's massive domestic legislation and partisan machinations over the national debt. Social Security cannot be addressed through the budget reconciliation process Democrats are attempting

to use to deliver Biden's promises.

Social Security's turn will come, said Rep. John Larson, D-Conn., chairman of the House Social Security subcommittee and author of legislation to tackle shortfalls that would leave the program unable to pay full benefits in less than 15 years. His bill would raise payroll taxes while also changing the COLA formula to give more weight to health care expenses and other costs that weigh more heavily on the elderly. Larson said he intends to press ahead next year.

"This one-time shot of COLA is not the antidote," he said. Although Biden's domestic package includes a major expansion of Medicare to cover dental, hearing and vision care, Larson said he hears from constituents that seniors are feeling neglected by the Democrats. "In town halls and tele-town halls they're saying, 'We are really happy with what you did on the child tax credit, but what about us?'" Larson added. "In a midterm election, this is a very important constituency."

The COLA is only one part of the annual financial equation for seniors. An announcement about Medicare's Part B premium for outpatient care is expected soon. It's usually an increase, so at least some of any Social Security raise goes for health care. The Part B premium is now \$148.50 a month, and the Medicare trustees report estimated a \$10 increase for 2022.

Economist Marilyn Moon, who also served as public trustee for Social Security and Medicare, said she believes the current spurt of inflation is an adjustment to highly unusual economic circumstances and the pattern of restraint on prices will reassert itself with time.□

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Border residents rejoice as U.S. says it will lift travel ban

SAN DIEGO (AP) — Beleaguered business owners and families separated by COVID-19 restrictions rejoiced Wednesday after the U.S. said it will reopen its land borders to nonessential travel next month, ending a 19-month freeze.

Travel across land borders from Canada and Mexico has been largely restricted to workers whose jobs are deemed essential. New rules will allow fully vaccinated foreign nationals to enter the U.S. regardless of the reason starting in early November, when a similar easing of restrictions is set for air travel. By mid-January, even essential travelers seeking to enter the U.S., such as truck drivers, will need to be fully vaccinated.

Shopping malls and big box retailers in U.S. border towns whose parking spaces had been filled by cars with Mexican license plates were hit hard by travel restrictions.

San Diego Mayor Todd Gloria said the economic impact was hard to quantify but can be seen in the sparse presence of shoppers at a high-end outlet mall on the city's border with Tijuana, Mexico. The decision comes at a critical time ahead of the holiday shopping season.

In Del Rio, Texas, Mexican visitors account for about 65% of retail sales, said Blanca Larson, executive director of the chamber of commerce and visitors bureau in the city of 35,000 people.



In this Friday June 15, 2012 file photo, Motorists make their way to Ambassador Bridge connecting Canada to the United States in Windsor, Ontario.

Associated Press

"Along the border, we're like more of one community than two different communities," she said.

The ban has also had enormous social and cultural impact, preventing family gatherings when relatives live on different sides of the border. Community events have stalled even as cities away from U.S. borders have inched toward normalcy.

In Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, where hockey and ice skating are ingrained, the Soo Eagles haven't had a home game against a Canadian opponent in 20 months. The players, 17 to 20 years old, have been traveling to Canada since border restrictions were lifted there two months ago.

Now the U.S. team can

host.

"I almost fell over when I read it," said Ron Lavin, co-owner of the Eagles. "It's been a long frustrating journey for people on a lot of fronts far more serious than hockey, but we're just really pleased. It's great for the city."

Fully vaccinated U.S. citizens and permanent residents have been allowed into Canada since August, provided they have waited at least two weeks since getting their second vaccine dose and can show proof of a recent negative COVID-19 test. Mexico has not enforced COVID-19 entry procedures for land travelers.

The latest move follows last month's announcement that the U.S. will end count-

try-based travel bans for air travel and instead require vaccination for foreign nationals seeking to enter by plane.

The new rules only apply to legal entry. Those who enter illegally will still be subject to expulsion under a public health authority that allows for the swift removal of migrants before they can seek asylum.

Travelers entering the U.S. by vehicle, rail and ferry will be asked about their vaccination status as part of the standard U.S. Customs and Border Protection inspection. At officers' discretion, travelers will have their proof of vaccination verified in a secondary screening process.

Unlike air travel, for which proof of a negative COV-

ID-19 test is required before boarding a flight to enter the U.S., no testing will be required to enter the U.S. by land or sea, provided the travelers meet the vaccination requirement.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the U.S. will accept travelers who have been fully vaccinated with any of the vaccines approved for emergency use by the World Health Organization, not just those in use in the U.S. That means that the AstraZeneca vaccine, widely used in Canada, will be accepted.

Officials said the CDC was still working to formalize procedures for admitting those who received doses of two different vaccines, as was fairly common in Canada.

U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said he was "pleased to be taking steps to resume regular travel in a safe and sustainable manner" and lauded the economic benefits of it.

Mexico, Canada and elected officials from U.S. border regions have pressured the Biden administration for months to ease restrictions.

"This is a win for families who've been separated and businesses and tourism industries whose operations have been blocked since the start of the pandemic," said U.S. Sen. Jeanne Shaheen of New Hampshire, echoing reactions of other federal, state and local officials. □

Apple CEO, NBA's Dwyane Wade help LGBTQ group build homes



NBA All-Star Dwyane Wade speaks during a news conference Wednesday, Oct. 13, 2021, in Salt Lake City.

Associated Press

By SOPHIA EPPOLITO
Associated Press/Report for America

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — Apple CEO Tim Cook and retired NBA All-Star Dwyane Wade joined Utah leaders Wednesday to announce the completion of a local advocacy group's campaign to build new homes that provide services for LGBTQ youth in the U.S. West.

Encircle, a non-profit providing mental health ser-

vices for LGBTQ youth, has surpassed its goal of raising \$8 million to build eight new homes with locations in Arizona, Idaho, Nevada and Utah aimed at providing safe spaces and preventing teen suicide.

"Encircle's mission is very personal to me because I see myself in so many of these young people," Cook told reporters at a press briefing Wednesday. "It's not easy when you're made to feel different or

less than because of who you are or who you love. It's a feeling that so many LGBTQ people know far too well." The group kicked off the initial campaign in February with donations from Apple and Utah Jazz owners Ryan and Ashley Smith. Wade, who joined the Utah Jazz ownership group in April, shared his experience as the parent of a transgender child and voiced his support for Encircle's mission. □

Climate change: North Carolina gov signs major energy law

By GARY D. ROBERTSON

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper of North Carolina signed a milestone energy bill into law Wednesday that aims to sharply reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the state's power plants by 2030, celebrating the legislative accomplishment with Republican lawmakers.

In a ceremony with legislators from both parties, Cooper enacted a consensus measure that now tasks the state Utilities Commission with coming up by the end of 2022 with the arrangements to meet the carbon dioxide reduction goals sought by the governor.

At least 16 states previously have passed legislation establishing greenhouse gas emissions reduction requirements, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures. The only other Southeast state to have done so before Wednesday was Virginia. "This is a new beginning," Cooper said at the Executive Mansion ceremony. "Putting real and enforceable carbon reduction targets into the law, North Carolina is working to re-



North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper completes signing into law a major energy bill as several legislators and a Cooper aide applaud during an Executive Mansion ceremony in Raleigh, N.C. Wednesday, Oct. 13, 2021.

Associated Press

duce the effect of climate change on marginalized populations, while putting our state at the forefront of the clean energy economy and the jobs that it brings." The directive aims to reduce energy producers' carbon dioxide output 70% from 2005 levels by 2030,

and achieve zero-net CO₂ emissions by 2050. To get there, coal-fired power plants operated by Duke Energy, the state's dominant utility, are expected to be retired early, replaced by an evolving mix of alternate fuels for electricity. Duke and other advocacy

groups will have input, too. The new law also allows Duke Energy to seek multiyear rate increases and performance-based earnings incentives from the state Utilities Commission — a significant win for the Charlotte-based company. Representatives of Duke

and other business groups supporting the new law attended the ceremony.

Senate leader Phil Berger, a Republican, described the law as a pro-economic growth measure, saying the business slowdown during the Colonial Pipeline disruption in the spring signaled the "consequences of an extended energy supply crunch."

"So it was critically important that the leaders of our state come together to agree on legislation for our energy future, and we did that," Berger said. "The framework we put in place ensures continued reliability of energy here in North Carolina."

The operator of the nation's largest fuel pipeline, Colonial confirmed it paid \$4.4 million to a gang of hackers shortly after a May 7 ransomware attack that had temporarily taken the pipeline system offline. Despite strong bipartisan support for the final measure and Cooper's involvement in negotiations, many environmental groups and advocates for the poor declined to endorse the measure. □

FDA spells out lower sodium goals for food industry



This Jan. 23, 2014 file photo shows the nutrition facts label on the side of a cereal box in Washington.

Associated Press

By CANDICE CHOI

NEW YORK (AP) — Food companies are coming under renewed pressure to use less salt after U.S. regulators spelled out long-awaited guidelines aimed at reducing sodium levels in dozens of foods including condiments, cereals,

french fries and potato chips. The voluntary goals finalized Wednesday for 163 foods are intended to help lower the amount of salt people eat. A majority of the sodium in U.S. diets comes from packaged or restaurant foods -- not

the salt added to meals at home -- making it hard for people to make changes on their own.

To get people used to eating less salt, the Food and Drug Administration said reductions have to be gradual and across the entire food supply so people don't keep reaching for higher sodium options.

"By putting out the targets, that really helps to level the playing field across the industry," said Susan Mayne, director of the FDA's food safety and nutrition division. Over the next 2.5 years, the FDA's target sodium levels aim to cut average intake by 12% — from 3,400 to 3,000 milligrams a day. That would still leave average intake above the federally recommended limit of 2,300 milligrams a day for people 14 and older.

But the agency says it will

monitor industry progress and keep issuing updated targets to bring levels closer to the recommended limit over time.

The FDA said it took into consideration industry feedback after issuing its draft guidance in 2016. Ketchup, mustard and hot sauce, for example, were split up and now have different targets. Another difference: The final guidance does not spell out a time frame for reaching longer-term targets.

"It's a huge disappointment that the 10-year goal didn't come out at the same time," said Dr. Dariush Mozaffarian, dean of the Tufts University's Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy.

Mozaffarian said some food companies resisted reduced sodium targets, but that more scientific

support has emerged for the federal guidance on sodium. In 2019, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine tied the recommended limit to a reduced risk of chronic disease. A recent study in China also found lower rates of stroke and major heart-related events among people using a salt substitute compared with those using regular salt.

Whether the targets are effective in pushing the industry to lower sodium levels will hinge on how the FDA monitors progress and publicly communicates about it, Mozaffarian said.

In a statement, the National Restaurant Association said it provided feedback to the FDA's draft guidance and that its member companies continue to provide options that address customer demand. □

Putin says relations with Biden "working and stable"

MOSCOW (AP) — Russian President Vladimir Putin said Wednesday that the Kremlin has "constructive" relations with Washington and voiced hope that mutual interests would eventually help normalize U.S.-Russia ties.

Putin, speaking during a panel discussion at an international energy conference in Moscow, also said that Russia stands ready to boost natural gas supplies to help assuage nervous energy markets in Europe, insisting that his country wants prices to remain stable.

He angrily rejected the allegations from some European experts and politicians that Russia has been holding up gas deliveries and causing energy prices to spike as "baseless political chatter," noting that Russian gas supplies have risen 15% over the year and are set to reach another record.

He noted that while Russia boosted supplies, the U.S. reduced liquefied natural gas supplies to Europe because of high demand in Asia.

"The claims that Russia has used energy as a weapon is a sheer nonsense and ravings," he said. "We are increasing supplies as much as our partners are asking us."

Putin argued that the newly built Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline to Germany, which bypasses Ukraine under the Baltic Sea, would be preferable to consumers because it's 2,000 kilo-



Russian President Vladimir Putin gestures while speaking at the plenary session of the Russian Energy Week in Moscow, Russia, Wednesday, Oct. 13, 2021.

Associated Press

meters (1,240 miles) shorter than the Ukrainian route, resulting in lower gas prices. The Russian leader added that Gazprom could extend the gas transit contract with Ukraine that expires in 2024, but noted what he described as a pitiful state of the Ukrainian pipeline network.

"Its gas transportation system hasn't seen any repairs for decades," he charged. Ukraine in the past has rejected such Russian criticism of its pipeline system accused Moscow of trying to deprive it of \$2 billion in annual transit fees for pumping the Russian gas to Europe. The two neighbors have been at sharp odds since Russia's 2014 annexation of Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula.

The Russian leader also rebuffed criticism of an ongoing domestic crackdown on dissent and independent media.

Putin strongly defended a Russian law requiring those who receive foreign funds and engage in unspecified political activities to register as "foreign agents," describing it as a quid pro quo response to a U.S. law used on Russian media in the United States.

Critics say the Russian law has been used to muzzle critical media outlets since the "foreign agent" stigma has strong pejorative connotations.

Dmitry Muratov, who won the 2021 Nobel Peace Prize on Friday for his work as editor of the independent Russian newspaper No-

vaya Gazeta, wondered if authorities would designate his paper as a "foreign agent."

Asked Wednesday if that was a possibility, Putin responded that Muratov shouldn't worry "if he doesn't violate the Russian law."

Putin also spoke scathingly of imprisoned Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny, charging that he was trying "to get business advantages by shielding himself with political activities." As per his custom, Putin did not mention Navalny by name.

Navalny, Putin's most adamant political foe, was imprisoned this year after returning to Russia from Germany, where he had been recuperating from nerve-

agent poisoning that he blames on the Kremlin. The Kremlin denies the accusation. He received a 2½-year prison term for violating the terms of a suspended sentence from a 2014 embezzlement conviction that he dismissed as politically motivated.

Commenting on Russia-U.S. ties, Putin said Russia's relations with the Biden administration have been "quite constructive" and he personally has developed "working, stable relations" with President Joe Biden.

"Mutual interests will undoubtedly lead to the normalization of our ties, and the American political establishment will stop speculating on the Russian-U.S. relations to the detriment of their own interests," he said, noting that the two nations have shared interests in arms control, fighting terrorism and money laundering, and stabilizing energy markets.

Putin added that Russian diplomats and visiting U.S. Undersecretary of State Victoria Nuland discussed possible further contacts between the two presidents following their June summit in Geneva.

In comments tweeted by the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, Nuland said she "very much appreciated the frank, productive review of U.S.-Russia relations" with Putin's foreign affairs adviser, Yuri Ushakov, on Wednesday, adding that "we remain committed to a stable, predictable relationship." □

EU looks to strengthen ties with Arctic, protect environment

BRUSSELS (AP) — The European Union announced plans Wednesday to open a representation in the Arctic and vowed to protect environment in a region the bloc says is of key strategic importance. The 27-nation bloc said it will open a European Commission office in Greenland and use EU funding to promote sustainable development in the Arctic.

"The Arctic is warming up to three times faster than the rest of the planet. The melting of ice and thawing of permafrost in the Arctic further accelerate climate change and have huge knock-on effects," said Virginijus Sinkevicius, the commissioner for environment, oceans and fisheries.

Acknowledging its environmental footprint in the region, the EU pledged to support marine protection and to promote research into the thawing permafrost.

Amid fierce competition between superpowers, the EU said it will also

seek commitments from partners to agree to an end of exploitation of oil, gas and coal.

Russia has sought to assert its influence over wide areas of the Arctic in competition with the United States, Canada, Denmark and Norway as shrinking polar ice from the warming planet offers new opportunities for resources and shipping routes. China also has shown an increasing interest in the region, which is believed to hold up to one-fourth of the Earth's undiscovered oil and gas.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has cited estimates that put the value of Arctic mineral riches at \$30 trillion.

"The Arctic is changing rapidly, owing to the impact of global warming, increased competition for natural resources and geopolitical rivalries," said Josep Borrell, the bloc's top diplomat. "These developments show that Europe must define its geopolitical interests broadly to promote stability, safety and peaceful cooperation in the Arctic." □

Harvard language program relocates from China to Taiwan

By HUIZHONG WU

Associated Press

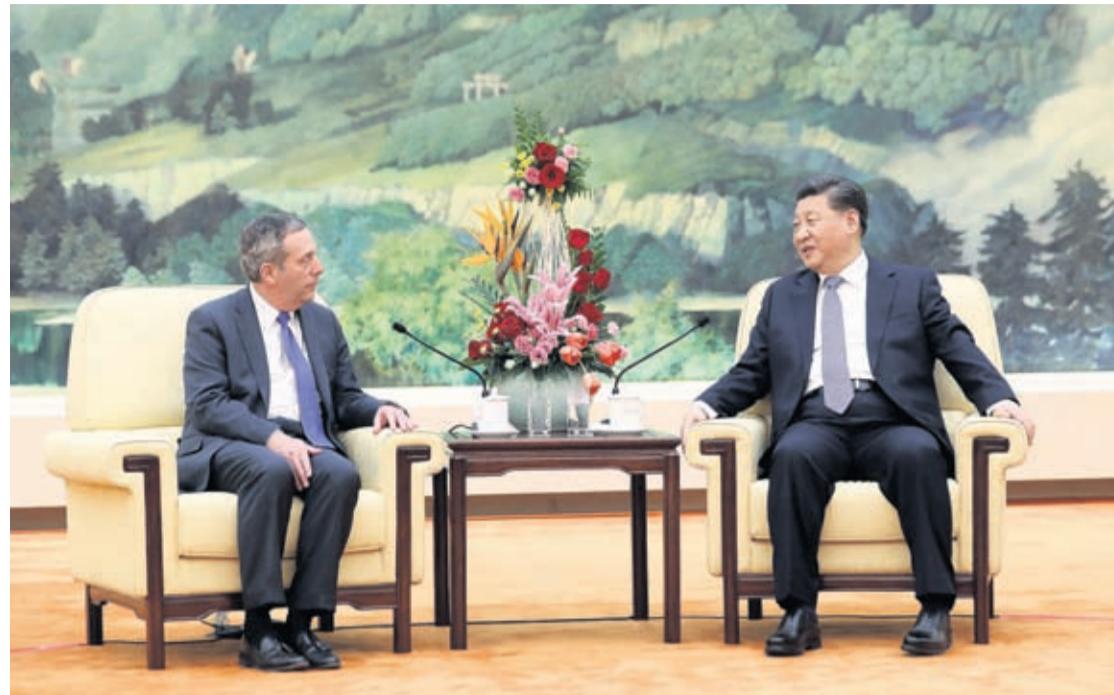
TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP)—An intensive summer language program hosted by Harvard University in Beijing will relocate to Taiwan in summer of 2022, as the U.S.-China relationship remains strained.

The program is moving to Taipei and will kick off next summer with about 60 students who will take eight weeks of classes, National Taiwan University confirmed Wednesday.

The decision was in part "due to a perceived lack of friendliness from the host institution" in Beijing, according to The Harvard Crimson student paper, which first reported the move.

Every summer, according to The Harvard Crimson, the program "would typically host a small party to celebrate the Fourth of July, during which students and faculty would eat pizza and sing the national anthem." But in 2019, the host university, Beijing Language and Culture University, said it could no longer host the event, Program Director Jennifer L. Liu told the paper.

Liu also said logistical issues impacted the decision. She



In this March 20, 2019, file photo, Chinese President Xi Jinping, right, meets with Harvard University President Lawrence Bacow at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing.

Associated Press

told The Harvard Crimson that "BLCU did not provide a single dorm for all the students, instead requiring the program split the students into two different dorms of different quality, or to find a hotel that could keep their students together."

Harvard has characterized the move primarily as an operational and logistical decision.

"The planned move of this program from Beijing to Taiwan has been considered

for some time and reflects a wide array of operational factors," the school said in a statement.

Its local partner in Taiwan said the same in a statement on Tuesday, noting that the universities had been discussing the decision since 2019, and it was due to start in 2020 but was suspended because of the pandemic.

Beijing Language and Culture University's news department did not respond

to an email request for comment.

China's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian said he did not know the particular issue with the program when asked about the move. However, he said "China always welcomes international students to study in China, attaches great importance to protection of their legitimate rights and interests, and proactively responds to the students' reasonable

concerns and appeals." The program is designed for intermediate and advanced Chinese language learners, and like many other study abroad programs, it features trips to local cultural and historical landmarks. In Beijing, students would visit the Great Wall, the Summer Palace and go on outings with local university students, according to the program's former website.

Beyond memorizing vocabulary or grammar structures, students got a chance to interact with their Chinese counterparts.

"I learned what Chinese millennials do when they get ghosted on (dating app) Tantan, how Chinese media portrayed America's 2016 election, and which Chinese popsicle flavors to stay away from," one student said in March 2020 on a Harvard website describing his study abroad experience.

In Taiwan, students will be able to visit places like the National Palace Museum, which houses many of the treasures once hosted in Beijing's Forbidden City, as well as Taiwan's famed night markets and Yangming mountain. □

Holocaust forum looks at social media's role in anti-Semitism



Sweden's King Carl Gustaf, center left, and Sweden's Prime Minister Stefan Lofven, center right, arrive at the Malmo International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism - REACT.

Associated Press

By JAN M. OLSEN

COPENHAGEN, Denmark

(AP)—Participants at a Holocaust remembrance conference in Sweden blamed social media Wednesday

for contributing to a global rise in antisemitism, while YouTube and Facebook officials pledged to be part of the solution.

Government and social

media representatives attending the International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance in Malmo vowed to crack down on hate speech, disinformation and the denial of facts both online and off. Facebook Chief Operating Officer Sheryl Sandberg said the company is "now removing 15 times more hate speech than we were just five years ago. And we are not going to stop."

The head of the European Union's executive arm, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen called Holocaust denial and antisemitism "a threat to Jewish people, but it is also a poison for our democracies, our values and our open societies."

From Brussels, von der Leyen said the 27-nation EU

plans to create "a network of young European ambassadors for Holocaust remembrance." She added: "Who is in a better position to teach the lessons of the Shoah to their peers than our young?"

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said the United States was allocating \$1 million to counter online antisemitic hate speech in the Mideast and North Africa. Washington also has started "an expanded series of international visitor leadership programs" to confront Holocaust distortion and antisemitism in North Africa, the Middle East, Europe and Latin America, he said.

"Our priorities include condemning and countering antisemitism, ensuring physical security for Jewish communities, supporting

Holocaust education, especially for young people, protecting religious freedom and urging countries to commit more deeply to the fight against hate speech online," Blinken said in a video message.

Pedro Pina, head of YouTube in Europe, Africa and the Middle East, said the video sharing platform owned by Google pledged more than 5 million euros (\$5.8 million).

Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Lofven, the event's host, said other pledges included new memorial sites, museums and educational programs dedicated to preserving the history of the Holocaust and the mass killings of Roma. And he said the one-day conference was "by no means the end of the road." □

Vatican-backed sex abuse research institute expands mandate

ROME (AP) — The Catholic Church's foremost research institute studying sexual abuse of minors is expanding its mandate to also include the sexual and spiritual abuse of adults, evidence of the Vatican's increasing awareness that children aren't the only victims of clergy who abuse their power and authority. The Rev. Hans Zollner, one of Pope Francis' top advisers on abuse, said the institute's broader scope reflects lessons from the #MeToo movement, the pope's own recognition that nuns and seminarians can be abused by their superiors, and evidence that systemic and structural problems in the church have allowed abuse to fester.

"We cannot only look at individual problems anymore. We need also to look into the institutional conditions that promote (abuse) or block a safe environment," Zollner told The Associated Press on Wednesday.

He spoke to the AP on the eve of the official launch of the new safeguarding institute at the Pontifical Gregorian University. The institute incorporates the decade-old Centre for Child Protection and, as a Vatican-sanctioned anthropology department, can now award academic degrees, have its own dedicated faculty and partner on equal footing with other universities.

The new institute's official name is the Institute of Anthropology, Interdisciplinary Studies on Human Dignity and Care, or IADC.

The institute's focus beyond just child protection is significant given the Vatican tends to develop policies by relying on the academic research and international conferences of its pontifical universities to provide the foundations for decisions taken higher up in the chain of command.

For Zollner, the growth of a full-fledged safeguarding institute is a development more than a decade in the making, and yet has still been met with resistance.



Hans Zollner, head of the new safeguarding institute at the Pontifical Gregorian University, poses for photos before an interview with the Associated Press, in Rome, Wednesday, Oct. 13, 2021.

Associated Press

"I have always been struggling with the question 'Why do we in the church struggle to accept the existence of abuse among us committed by clergy? Why is it so difficult to accept that, to see that reality? Because you have still people who deny that reality and say, 'We don't have cases,'" he said.

Zollner said the idea to broaden the scope of study came after a 2018 Pennsylvania grand jury report exposed how a series of bishops in the U.S. state systematically covered up for abusive priests. Subsequent investigative reports into clergy abuse, including in Zollner's native Germany and most recently France, identified the same systemic and structural problems.

Also in 2018, the Vatican began its investigation of ex-Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, an American archbishop who was eventually defrocked by Francis after the Vatican determined he sexually abused minors as well as adult seminarians under his authority.

Zollner stressed that the new institute was by no means pushing aside its key focus on child protection, calling the sexual abuse of children "the most horrific thing you can think of."

But the expanded focus will allow for the study of issues that previously were outside the center's ori-

nal scope, he said, such as the spiritual abuse of adults by leaders of new religious movements, or the institutional and structural factors within the church that facilitated abuse.

"If, as we have seen in numerous reports now, there is a systemic failure of acting according to your own norms and standards, then the question doesn't concern only this priest who is an abuser or that bishop who has covered up," he said. "The question that comes to the fore is the question 'Is the system trustworthy?' And that is the question that we have to deal with."

Zollner founded the Centre for Child Protection in 2012, first in the archdiocese of Munich and then based at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. In its nearly decade-long existence, 140 students have completed a six-month safeguarding training certificate program at the center, and more than a dozen have gone onto masters and doctorate-level studies. Some 4,500 people also have been trained via a blended learning program with partner institutions.

Juan Carlos Cruz, a Chilean abuse survivor whom Francis recently appointed to join Zollner on the pontifical child protection commission, said he has seen the fruits of the Gregorian's

underway in the Vatican on how to define "vulnerable person," since the Vatican itself is somewhat split on the issue and whether someone can be considered vulnerable even temporarily.

The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, which handles cases of abuse involving minors, considers someone over 18 who is "habitually" impaired and cannot reason as equivalent to a minor and therefore under its jurisdiction.

Yet a new procedural law introduced in 2019 expanded the concept beyond a "habitual" situation of vulnerability to people "even occasionally" experiencing limits to their ability to understand or resist a sexual act. Where the Vatican ends with the definition could determine if the church will sanction a priest, for example, who takes sexual advantage of a woman during spiritual direction, when she is experiencing a temporary period of emotional or psychological vulnerability, rather than considering the encounter consensual. □

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Travellers' Choice 2020

LOCAL



Prince Bernhard Culture Fund Caribbean Foundation Grants Support to Aruba Photo Room and Its Latest Exhibitions: Caribbean + Southern Dialogs



ORANJESTAD — The Talk of the Town Hotel & Beach Club in collaboration with the Art Museum of the Americas presents Caribbean Dialogs, an interwoven photo artists' co-curated exhibition with works by photographers Rafael Barragan (Venezuela), Damilice Mansur (Aruba), Darlin Quiroz (Colombia/Aruba), and Fernando Vermeer (Aruba), and curated

by Fabian Gonçalves Borrega and Renwick Heronimo. The exhibition is shown along with Southern Dialogs, an exhibition curated by Elda Harrington and Silvia Mangialardi. Southern Dialogs features the work of eleven artists from Chile and Argentina.

Aruba Photo Room and Dialogs was established partly with financial support

from the Prince Bernhard Culture Funds Caribbean Foundation.

The exhibition will be on view from Wednesday, October 27th, 2021 until Wednesday, January 20th, 2022. A lecture by Fabian Gonçalves Borrega to accompany the exhibition will be held the following day, on Thursday, October 28th at 7pm.

Aruba Photo Room at the Talk of the Town Hotel & Beach Club will host an opening reception on Wednesday, October 27th, 2021 from 7pm to 9pm. Visitors will require a mask to enter the space. For more information about the exhibition or programming please contact Eva Gonzalez at eva@arubaphotoroom.com. □



Honoring of an Emerald Ambassador at Playa Linda Beach Resort

PALM BEACH — Recently, ATA representative Jonathan Boekhoudt had the great pleasure in honoring many loyal Aruba visitors with their distinctive certificates. These certificates are a way to say "Masha Danki" for continuously choosing Aruba as a favorite vacation destination.

The titles are as following: 10+ years "Distinguished Visitor", 20+ years "Goodwill Ambassador" and 35+ years "Emerald Ambassador".

Mrs. Andrea Hreschak from Connecticut, who loves coming to the island for its people, weather, family, beaches and people, received the honorary title of Emerald Ambassador.

In the picture honoree Andrea Hreschak, Yvette of the Playa Linda Beach Resort together with Boekhoudt handed over the Emerlad Certificate to Hreschak and thanked her for coming to her home away from home for so many years. □

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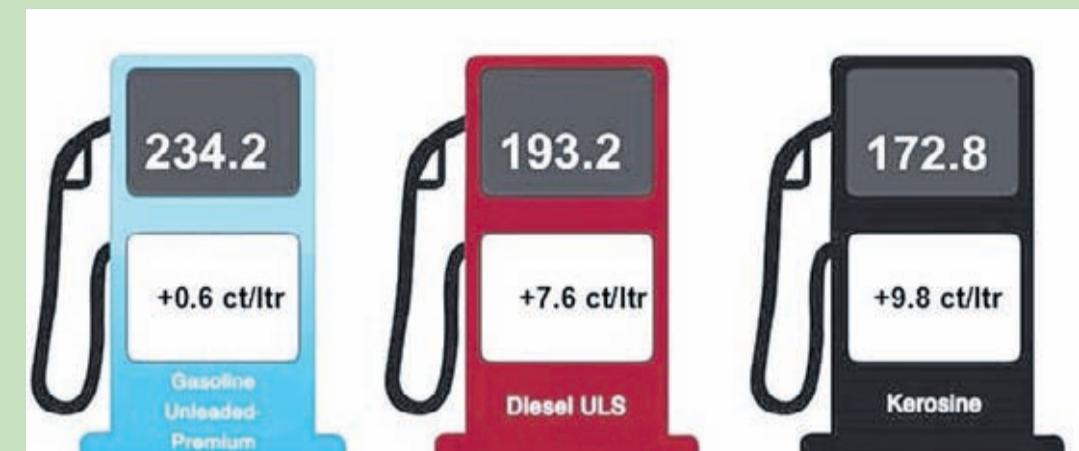
ORANJESTAD – The Crisis team informs that starting October 8, 2021, some countries, including The Netherlands and Brazil from the list of high-risk countries for COVID-19.

It entails that effective October 8, 2021, residents of Aruba that are completely vaccinated can travel back from the Netherlands and Brazil with their vaccine certificate. They do not need to take a PCR test to enter Aruba. The vaccination certificate must be issued by the Department of Public Health of Aruba, and the traveler must wait 14 days after getting the last vaccine to travel back to Aruba. Tourists traveling to Aruba from these countries can also enter without a PCR test. They must upload their EU Digital COVID Certificate (DCC) in PDF format on the ED online platform. DVG will control the certificate, and if approved, the tourist may visit Aruba.□

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New prices for petroleum products October 13, 2021



ORANJESTAD – The Minister of Finance, Economic Affairs and Culture announces the adjusted prices for petroleum products starting October 13, 2021:

Gasoline unleaded-premium : 234,2 cent p/ltr. (+ 0,6 cent)
Gasoil LS : 193,2 cent p/ltr. (+ 7,6 cent)
Kerosene : 172,8 cent p/ltr. (+ 9,8 cent)

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PALM BEACH — A true once-in-a-lifetime experience is coming up. The stage: an Aruban cunucu house creating a magical ambiance. The play: The Chef's Garden; a 6-course culinary voyage and French-Asian gastronomic ecstasy by Dutch top chef Martijn Liebregts on Wednesdays. You will leave this culinary Garden of Eden in an enchanted state creating a memory that will last a lifetime. Be sure to reserve this opportunity before others do. This production is presented to you by Papillon Restaurant.

Sometimes combining the best of the best is a matter of all things falling into place. Every Wednesday from 7pm you are welcomed to enter a world where food is a passion. Papillon Restaurant presents their guest chef Liebregts - who will be on the island for a limited time period - and with The Chef's Garden menu being a fresh concept on the island, we're sure you will fall completely in love with this.

A bit about Martijn

Liebregts is the perfect example of when career and passion come together. He earned his spurs at Amber, one of the best French fine dining restaurants Hong Kong has to offer, with 2 Michelin-stars and ranked as the 24th best restaurant in the world. Amber has been the



Papillon Restaurant presents: Chef's Garden, culinary magic by European top chef in a romantic garden



place where he got inspired by the use of Asian ingredients prepared in a classical French way which is still the base of his nowadays cooking style. Moving back to Amsterdam, The Netherlands, he joined the team of former Bib Gourmand restaurant "Wilde Zwijnen", which was awarded the title "The New Dutch Cuisine" by the New York Times. He has been there and done it all around the world.

The menu is carefully done with local products, fresh and perfectly matched with a selection of wines by local sommeliers. Diet options are available; please inform them when you make your reservation.

The Secret Garden & Papillon

This is an in-home dining experience where you will feel you are part of an exclusive setting. Private culinary events are the owner's specialty and their lush, tropical garden is also inviting for you to relax and indulge in hours of authentic culinarian delights, a heaven to foodies. For more than a decade, Papillon restaurant has built a reputation with the fusion of classic French cuisine, Dutch and Caribbean flavors. They know how to thrill and in collaboration with The Secret Garden we can only expect phenomenal.□

For reservations:

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The Hockenberry's honored as Distinguished visitors

EAGLE BEACH — Recently, Mr. Mario Arends of the Aruba Tourism Authority, had the great pleasure to honor Loyal and friendly visitors of Aruba as Distinguished Visitors at their home away from home.

The honorees were: **Dwight and Dolly Hockenberry** from Pennsylvania.

The symbolic honorary title is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism, as a token of appreciation to the guests who visit Aruba between 10-20-35 and more consecutive years.



Arends thanked them for choosing Aruba as their vacation destination and as their home away from home for so many years together with the members of Bucuti and Tara Beach Resort.

Top reason for returning provided by the honorees were: The people, beautiful beaches, delicious food and peaceful feeling that the island gives.□

Millennial Money: Save for holidays now, skip regret later

By MELISSA LAMBARENA of NerdWallet

Factoring holiday expenses into your budget all year long is effective for avoiding debt, but it's not always feasible with a limited budget or unforeseen expenses.

When that's the case, lacking a strategy for holiday spending can leave you vulnerable to debt and overspending that delays financial goals. But it's not too late to come up with a last-minute plan to save money for the holidays.

The small end-of-the-year window can offer some time to make money moves that help prevent a holiday debt hangover.

1. ALIGN YOUR HOLIDAY BUDGET WITH FINANCIAL GOALS

When determining how much to spend over the holidays, begin with your budget, suggests Jason Speciner, a certified financial planner at the firm Financial Planning Fort Collins.

"Start with how much money you're willing to spend — and able to spend — on gift giving and then work your list into that," he says. "Don't put the cart before the horse and end up overspending because you've, you know, put dozens of people on your gift list," he says.

If your debt or budget leaves no room for holiday expenses, plan to spend time with people through



In this Nov. 30, 2020 file photo, a shopper walks by a holiday window display in New York. Associated Press

free holiday activities, make gifts or save with a secret gift exchange. Set expectations early by alerting people to your plans.

Adding to the debt pile during the holidays gets expensive and takes longer to pay off. Strategize how you'll pay off any debt and prioritize high-interest debt first. With good credit (a FICO score of 690 or higher), a balance transfer credit card lets you move debt from a high-interest credit card to one with a lower interest rate, possibly a 0% intro APR. There's typically a fee of 3% to 5% assessed for each amount transferred. Without interest, your monthly payments are applied directly to your balance, reducing the time

it takes to pay off debt. With less-than-ideal credit, a debt management plan through an accredited nonprofit credit counseling agency may offer relief if you're struggling to make progress.

2. USE THE BONUS-FRIENDLY SEASON

If you're debt-free and planning to get a new credit card, look for one with a sign-up bonus that can offer additional cash or rewards to defray holiday expenses. Sign-up bonuses usually offer a three-month window to meet spending requirements, and they can be easier to reach if you're charging everyday and holiday expenses. A card with a 0% APR on purchases can also

save money on interest for some time.

3. EARN REWARDS WITH CASH-BACK APPS

A cash-back app can earn additional value on everyday purchases. It may require uploading receipts, but for Krystal Sharp, coupon coach and creator of the blog Krys the Maximizer, it's worth the effort. She uses Ibotta, Fetch Rewards and other apps to earn cash back or gift cards. These apps let you add offers in-store or online from certain retailers and earn cash back on eligible items purchased. Or you can upload a receipt to redeem certain offers. You may also earn incentives for referring other people. For more value, Sharp uses a rewards

credit card to make purchases and stack earnings. "I'm trying to focus a lot on how can I earn gift cards, how can I get referrals, how can I save enough at the store and use my store rewards to buy things we need for the holidays," she says.

Depending on how much you spend, it's possible to make \$20 to \$25 in a week or two with everyday purchases, and that's typically enough to cash out, according to Sharp. The earnings add up over time.

4. SAVE WITH A 'NO-SPEND CHALLENGE'

A foolproof way to save is to refrain from making unnecessary purchases over a certain period of time. You can try a no-spend month, no-spend weeks or no-spend weekends, depending on your preference. The money saved can offset potential costs during the holidays.

For Courtney Clarke, a New York-based content creator at TheLifeOfCo YouTube channel, a "no-spend November" helped her stay on track with her debt goals in 2020. For a month, she spent only on essentials, avoiding eating out and activities that cost money.

"I definitely can't say that I was perfect in the matter, but it's just a nice reset to retrain your brain," says Clarke. "It's just making sure that you're attempting to get the best out of it." □

Theft-plagued Walgreens closing 5 more San Francisco stores

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Walgreens said Tuesday that it will close five more stores in San Francisco next month because of organized retail theft in another blow to a city that has earned an embarrassing reputation for widespread and brazen shoplifting.

The stores will close down next month, SFGATE reported. It said Walgreens has closed at least 10 stores in the city since the start of 2019. "Retail theft across our San Francisco stores has continued to increase in the past

few months to five times our chain average" despite large increases in security, Walgreens spokesperson Phil Caruso said.

San Francisco Supervisor Ahsha Safai said he was devastated by the loss of a Mission Street store that "has been a staple for seniors, families and children for decades." "This is a sad day for San Francisco," Safai told SFGATE. "We can't continue to let these anchor institutions close that so many people rely on."

Last year, Walgreens closed one store where the chain

said it was losing \$1,000 a day to thefts. Frustration and fear over thefts have been fueled by widely circulating images of shoplifting caught on video. This summer, shoplifters in masks carrying armfuls of designer handbags sprinted from a downtown Neiman Marcus department store and into getaway cars.

In June, a masked man was caught on video at a Walgreens, stuffing items into a trash bag before cruising out of the store on a bicycle. A suspect was arrested in that theft. □



In this June 26, 2006 file photo, window shoppers look at a Walgreens storefront in San Francisco. Associated Press

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 45 Rigging

1 Wild party support

5 Table

protector

DOWN

11 Canyon

1 Garden

sound sections

12 Breathe in

2 Farm unit

13 Poker

3 Getting

variety fit

14 Dr. Seuss

4 D.C.

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5 Casual

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24 Different

36 Arm bone

25 Assn.

37 Eye drop

26 One —

38 Fuming

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39 Keats

27 Standard

40 Nonsense

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beach

10-14



Yesterday's answer

A	C	H	E	B	O	S	S	E	D
S	L	A	Y	A	T	I	V	E	
T	A	L	E	N	E	A	T	E	
A	W	L		A	J	A	R		
M	E	L	O	N	B	E	G		
S	C	A	L	E	S	T	A	R	
A	I	R	S		A	L	I	T	
W	A	K	E	S	X	A	L	E	
A	D	R	I	F	T	P	R	A	
P	E	D	R	I	F	P	R	A	

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

10-14

CRYPTOQUOTE

D R G Z Y I Z K M N Z M J X W G

G R D P O N X E D R G I X Y Y Z V V Y K

X J I G Y Y . — C D N Z R R I D Y E O Z R O

Q D R O D G J N G

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: PUT YOUR HEART, MIND AND SOUL INTO EVEN YOUR SMALLEST TASK. THIS IS THE SECRET OF SUCCESS.
— SWAMI SIVANANDA

William Shatner, TV's Capt. Kirk, blasts into space



Blue Origin's New Shepard rocket launches carrying passengers William Shatner, Chris Boshuizen, Audrey Powers and Glen de Vries from its spaceport near Van Horn, Texas, Wednesday, Oct. 13, 2021.

Associated Press

By MARCIA DUNN and RICK TABER

VAN HORN, Texas (AP) —

Hollywood's Captain Kirk, 90-year-old William Shatner, blasted into space Wednesday in a convergence of science fiction and science reality, reaching the final frontier aboard a ship built by Jeff Bezos' Blue Origin company.

The "Star Trek" actor and three fellow passengers hurtled to an altitude of 66.5 miles (107 kilometers) over the West Texas desert in the fully automated capsule, then safely parachuted back to Earth in a flight that lasted just over 10 minutes.

"What you have given me is the most profound experience," an exhilarated Shatner told Bezos after climbing out of the hatch, the words spilling from him in a soliloquy almost as long as the flight. "I hope I never recover from this. I hope that I can maintain what I feel now. I don't want to lose it."

He said that going from the blue sky to the utter blackness of space was a moving experience: "In an instant you go, 'Whoa, that's death.' That's what I saw."

Shatner became the oldest person in space, eclipsing the previous record — set by a passenger on a similar jaunt on a Bezos spaceship in July — by eight years. The flight included about three minutes of weightlessness and a view of the curvature of the Earth.

Sci-fi fans reveled in the opportunity to see the man

best known as the brave and principled commander of the starship Enterprise boldly go where no star of American TV has gone before. The internet went wild, with Trekkies quoting favorite lines from Kirk, including, "Risk: Risk is our business. That's what this starship is all about."

"This is a pinch-me moment for all of us to see Capt. James Tiberius Kirk go to space," Blue Origin launch commentator Jacki Correse said before liftoff. She said she, like so many others, was drawn to space by shows like "Star Trek."

NASA sent best wishes ahead of the flight, tweeting: "You are, and always shall be, our friend."

The flight brought priceless star power to Bezos' space-tourism business, given its built-in appeal to baby boomers, celebrity watchers and space enthusiasts. Shatner starred in TV's original "Star Trek" from 1966 to 1969, back when the U.S. was racing for the moon, and went on to appear in a string of "Star Trek" movies. Bezos is a huge "Star Trek" fan — the Amazon founder had a cameo as an alien in one of the later movies — and Shatner rode free as his invited guest.

As a favor to Bezos, Shatner took up into space some "Star Trek" tricorders and communicators — sort of the iPhones of the future — that Bezos made when he was a 9-year-old Trekkie. Bezos said his mother had saved them for 48 years.

Bezos himself drove the four crew members to the launch pad, accompanied them to the platform high above the ground and cranked the hatch shut after they climbed aboard the 60-foot rocket. He was there to greet them when the capsule floated back to Earth under its brilliant blue-and-red parachutes.

"Hello, astronauts. Welcome to Earth!" a jubilant Bezos said as he opened the hatch of the New Shepard capsule, named for first American in space, Alan Shepard.

Shatner and his crewmates wore close-fitting, flame-retardant, royal-blue flight suits, not exactly the tight, futuristic-for-the-'60s V-necks that the crew of the Enterprise had on TV. The actor said he was struck by the vulnerability of Earth and the relative sliver of its atmosphere.

"Everybody in the world needs to do this. Everybody in the world needs to see," he said. "To see the blue color whip by, and now you're staring into blackness, that's the thing. The covering of blue, this sheath, this blanket, this comforter of blue that we have around, we say, 'Oh, that's blue sky.' And then suddenly you shoot through it all, and you're looking into blackness, into black ugliness."

Shatner said the return to Earth was more jolting than his training led him to expect and made him wonder whether he was going to make it back alive.

"Everything is much more powerful," he said. "Bang, this thing hits. That wasn't anything like the simulator. ... Am I going to be able to survive the G-forces?"

Passengers are subjected to nearly 6 G's, or six times the force of Earth's gravity, as the capsule descends. Blue Origin said Shatner and the rest of the crew met all the medical and physical requirements, including the ability to hustle up and down several flights of steps at the launch tower. □

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Trisha Yearwood on making jerky, bacon straws and wontons

By MARK KENNEDY

NEW YORK (AP) — Trisha Yearwood is a collard greens kind of gal, but her husband, Garth Brooks, is definitely not a collard greens kind of guy. So she had to be a little sly when it came time to perfect her Collard-Stuffed Wontons. When the country star and her collaborator and sister, Beth, made them the first time at her Nashville home, they didn't tell Brooks and his buddy what was in them when the two men came into the kitchen after working on their farm.

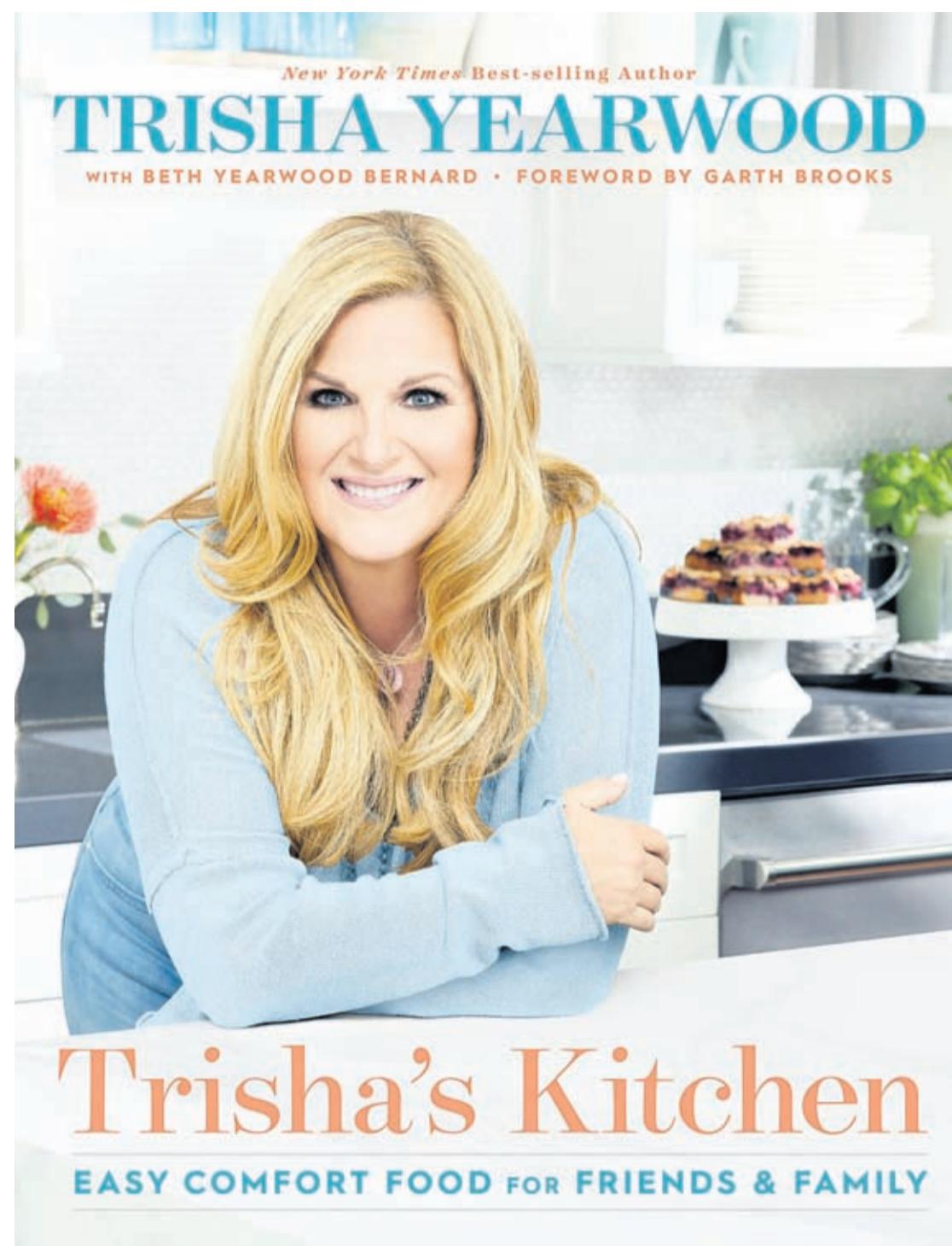
"I said, 'You try this.' Didn't tell them what it was. And they ate them all. They were like, 'These are amazing!'" Yearwood recalls. "And then I told him he ate his collard greens for the day."

The quirky South-meets-Asia wontons are a feature of Yearwood's fourth cookbook, "Trisha's Kitchen: Easy Comfort Food for Friends and Family," which has 125 recipes that blend her knowledge of soulful Southern cooking with influences from China, Italy and Mexico.

Yearwood says the last five years hosting her Emmy-winning Food Network series "Trisha's Southern Kitchen" has helped boost her kitchen skills and expand her recipe development.

"I've entered into a really cool phase and I really attribute the show for just giving me confidence to try new things. And now they've become kind of family favorites and they feel like things that have been in the family forever," she says.

Yearwood is open to ideas, even asking at restaurants how the chefs make favored dishes. She walked away from a sushi restaurant in Tulsa, Oklahoma, with the origins of Garth's Teriyaki Bowl, which uses



This cover image released by Mariner Books shows "Trisha's Kitchen: Easy Comfort Food for Friends and Family" by Trisha Yearwood.

Associated Press

marinated chicken and steak.

That same restaurant inspired her Steak & Avocado Rolls, which use soy wrappers to mimic sushi rolls. Neither Yearwood nor Brooks are fans of raw fish — "we're sort of roll-it-in-flour-and-fry-it people," she confesses — but their girls are, so the recipe is a compromise.

Yearwood also leaned on

several family recipes for dishes in the new book, including some from her dad's mom. Her grandmother was a dessert specialist but none of her recipes seemed to have survived until the family recently found a little book with handwritten recipes, including one for Hundred Dollar Cupcakes. Trisha and Beth also recreated a dish that was never writ-

ten down, Jack's Fried Pies, named after her father.

Jerky turns out to have a special place in her kitchen, and yet she has learned that she doesn't need fancy equipment or a dehydrator to make her BBQ or teriyaki jerky. She just turns on her oven.

"It's really a low and slow in the oven, like at 200 degrees for hours. It's not expensive to do. You can get a really inexpensive cut of meat and slice it yourself, or you can have your butcher slice it in the strips for you and then you marinate it and then you just slow bake it. Then it can be as tender or as tough as you like," she says.

Other nifty recipes include

one for Camo Cake she made for her nephew's birthday that uses food coloring to mimic the look of camouflage, and Chicken Potpie Burger, which combines a classic chicken potpie with a bun.

"Everything that's in the book is the way she really is and the way she really cooks. And it is a reflection of her life and her personality," says Deb Brody, vice president and publisher of adult trade at Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. "It's not just a celebrity putting her name on a cookbook. She actually cooks this way."

Though Yearwood includes plenty of vegetarian options, bacon plays a key role in "Trisha's Kitchen," including a breakthrough in snack technology called Bacon Straws: twisted bacon strips brushed with maple syrup and red pepper flakes and sprinkled with cheddar cheese.

"When I'm cooking, if there's bacon going on a burger or something, anybody at my house walks by and they're going to take a piece of bacon. We all just want the bacon, like, it doesn't have to be on anything," she says. "So this was that idea of making it its own thing, making it an appetizer and it's crunchy and crispy. You just walk by and grab one — or 10."

The pandemic accelerated the book's creation, with Yearwood's touring stilled and lockdown forcing her into her kitchen. Easy comfort food was a natural way for her to cook her way out of quarantine.

"I did a lot of sitting on the couch and drinking coffee and going down the rabbit hole of depression. But then — I think it was getting close to a few months in — I was like, 'This would be a perfect time just to write a new book,'" she says.

"It kind of had been knocking on the door, almost like when you need to make a new album. In a way, it was really therapeutic and cathartic for me to be able to focus on something like that, because food really does bring us together." □

Simmons drama drags on for 76ers without a resolution

By DAN GELSTON
AP Sports Writer

CAMDEN, N.J. (AP) — This much is known: Ben Simmons is back in Philadelphia. But there's no clear sign yet the All-Star guard is set to rescind his trade request and actually play for the 76ers.

Even coach Doc Rivers — publicly, at least — says he's unsure of the status of the trade demand, the latest wrinkle in the on-again-off-again relationship between Simmons and the Sixers.

"I don't know. He's voiced that, but we'll see how that works out," Rivers said Wednesday at team practice.

A rescinded request seems improbable, though Rivers said Simmons "was great, he was good" when the two met on Tuesday, a day after the three-time All-Star surprised the franchise by showing up to its arena during a preseason game to take a COVID-19 test.

Rivers said Simmons was scheduled to return to the practice facility late Wednesday for an individual workout and will not practice with the team until he clears NBA health and



Philadelphia 76ers' Doc Rivers listens to a question while speaking with the media at the team's NBA basketball practice facility, Wednesday, Oct. 13, 2021, in Camden, N.J.

Associated Press

safety protocols. That is, if Simmons returns to play at all. That's still a big if for the Sixers, especially with one more preseason game Friday at Detroit before next week's season opener at New Orleans. Much like Marshawn Lynch at a Super Bowl media day, Simmons may be here only so he won't get fined. The 25-year-old from Australia

has four years and \$147 million left on his max contract — though the 76ers placed in escrow \$8.25 million due to the guard, and fines for missing games and practices could be subtracted from that amount. Rivers, who turned 60 on Wednesday, said he wanted Simmons to play. "I'm assuming he's going to play, but who knows? I can't get in anyone's

head," Rivers said. Rivers said he hasn't ruled out Simmons traveling with the team to Detroit. "Whether we play him or not, that's going to depend on what we see this week," Rivers said. "He's coming from behind, because he hasn't been in camp, obviously. Having said that, do you rush him and put him on the floor? That's a whole other subject. What we see

this week is how we determine everything going forward."

Simmons missed training camp and the preseason so far in the wake of his off-season trade demand that rankled some teammates, raised the wrath of fans and left many puzzled why he wants off last season's No. 1 seed in the Eastern Conference.

Sixers President Daryl Morey and Rivers have been publicly optimistic since the start of training camp that Simmons would play again for the Sixers.

Simmons, the No. 1 pick of the 2016 draft, had been paired with Joel Embiid as the franchise cornerstones as the Sixers chase their first NBA championship since 1983. He averaged 15.9 points, 8.1 rebounds and 7.7 assists over four seasons with the Sixers, who drafted him out of LSU, where he played only one season. The Sixers downplayed potential issues in the locker room, should Simmons return. Starters Seth Curry and Danny Green both said Wednesday they had not talked to Simmons this week but would welcome him back. □

Runner sues ex-coach, Nike for millions over alleged abuse

PORTRLAND, Ore. (AP) — Distance runner Mary Cain, whose career fizzled after what she has called four miserable years at the Nike Oregon Project, has filed a \$20 million lawsuit against her former coach, Alberto Salazar, and their employer, Nike.

Cain accused Salazar of emotionally abusing her when she joined the team in 2012 at age 16, The Oregonian/OregonLive reported. The lawsuit portrays Salazar as an angry control freak who was obsessed with Cain's weight and publicly humiliated her about it. That, she said, took a toll on her physical and mental health. Nike was aware but failed to intervene, according to the lawsuit.

Nike did not return messages from the newspaper

seeking comment. Salazar could not be reached but has previously denied abuse allegations, and has said neither Cain nor her parents raised concerns while she was part of the program.

In the lawsuit filed Monday in Multnomah County Circuit Court, Cain alleges Salazar on several occasions required her to get on a scale in front of others and would then criticize her. Salazar also policed Cain's food intake, she said. At times, Cain was so hungry, she said, she stole energy bars from teammates. Cain went to her parents for support and alleges Salazar eventually tired of the parental interference. By 2019, Cain says she was depressed, had an eating disorder, generalized anxi-

ety and was cutting herself. "Nike was letting Alberto weight-shame women, objectify their bodies, and ignore their health and well-being as part of its culture," said Kristen West McCall, a Portland lawyer representing Cain. "This was a systemic and pervasive issue. And they did it for their own gratification and profit."

In 2019, Cain told The New York Times in a video essay that she was emotionally and physically abused while in the program. Nike at the time called the allegations deeply troubling and said it would look into them.

Salazar helped found the Nike Oregon Project to make American distance runners competitive with the rest of the world.

The Nike Oregon Project



In this April 29, 2016, file photo, Mary Cain walks off the track after competing in the women's special 1500-meter run at the Drake Relays athletics meet in Des Moines, Iowa.

Associated Press

was disbanded in 2019 after the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency accused Salazar of three violations. The agency banned him from the sport for four years. Salazar appealed to the Court for Arbitration for Sport. Last month, the court upheld Salazar's four-year ban from the sport and some of USADA's findings. It ruled that Salazar attempted an "intentional and orchestrated scheme to mislead" anti-doping investigators when he tampered with evidence. □

Close calls: NFL has record number of games decided late

By JOSH DUBOW
AP Pro Football Writer

From Lamar Jackson's improbable comeback that ended in an overtime win for Baltimore to the missed kick festival between Green Bay and Cincinnati, the NFL had several more games go down to the wire in Week 5.

Four more games were decided with a winning score in either the final minute of regulation or overtime. That raised the total this season to 19 games decided that late, the most through five weeks in NFL history.

There have been 21 games decided by three points or fewer this season, tied for the third most ever through five weeks.

For the third week this season, two games went into overtime, with it also happening in Weeks 1 and 4. The Ravens, Raiders, Titans and Bengals have all played two OT games so far, with only the Raiders coming out on top both times.

Perhaps no team has been hurt more by end of game theatrics than the Lions, who lost 21-19 to Minnesota on Sunday when Greg Joseph hit a 54-yard field goal with no time left. That



Baltimore Ravens quarterback Lamar Jackson (8) throws the ball during the second half of an NFL football game against the Indianapolis Colts, Monday, Oct. 11, 2021, in Baltimore.

Associated Press

came two weeks after Baltimore's Justin Tucker hit a record 66-yarder on the final play of another Detroit loss, 19-17. The Lions are the first team in NFL history to lose two games in the same season on game-winning field goals of at least 50 yards with no time left on the clock.

JUST FOR KICKS

The rest of the league seemed to struggle in the kicking game this past

week, with kickers combining to miss a record 13 extra points and 14 field goals. The problem was most stark in Cincinnati, where Green Bay's Mason Crosby and the Bengals' Evan McPherson combined to miss six kicks. Crosby missed an extra point early and then field goals on three straight possessions late in the game, including two that would have ended the game,

before winning it with a 49-yarder in overtime.

McPherson also missed one in the final minute of regulation and a potential game-winner in overtime. The six missed kicks were the most in a game since Crosby missed five (four field goals and an extra point) and Matt Prater missed a field goal in a 31-23 Detroit victory over Green Bay on Oct. 7, 2018.

In between those two

games, when Crosby combined for seven missed field goals, he missed just four in 51 games, including the playoffs. The 27 combined missed kicks in the league were the most in a single week since Week 12 in 1987, when kickers missed 26 field goals and one extra point. The last time there were more than 27 in a week came in Week 14 in 1981, when there were nine missed extra points and 20 missed field goals.

BRADY'S BEST

Tom Brady keeps hitting more milestones at age 44. Brady threw for 411 yards and five TDs in Tampa Bay's 45-17 win over Miami last week. That was Brady's ninth career game with at least five TD passes, tying Peyton Manning for second most to Drew Brees' 11 in NFL history.

Four of those games have come since Brady turned 40. The only other players 40 or older to do it even once are Brees at age 40 in 2019 against San Francisco and 40-year-old Warren Moon against the Raiders in 1997. Brady's 36 games with at least four TD passes also passed Manning for second place, one shy of Brees' record. □

Judge denies request by Cowboys' Collins to halt suspension



In this Aug. 13, 2021, file photo, Dallas Cowboys' La'el Collins walks off the field during a preseason NFL football game against the Arizona Cardinals in Glendale, Ariz.

Associated Press

SHERMAN, Texas (AP) — A federal judge has denied a request by Dallas Cowboys offensive lineman La'el Collins for an injunction that would have halted his five-game sus-

pension with one game remaining.

U.S. District Judge Amos Mazzant suggested in his ruling issued Tuesday that the NFL suspended Collins in violation of the league's

collective bargaining agreement with the players' union. However, Mazzant ruled the arbitrator's decision in Collins' appeal was based on a "reasonable construction of the parties' agreements."

The ruling means Collins won't be eligible to play Sunday at New England. The seventh-year player can return to the team next week, when the Cowboys are idle. Collins can play again in Week 8 at Minnesota.

The NFL accused Collins of bribery in a court filing that opposed the request for a preliminary injunction. Representatives for Collins have strongly denied that and said the league misled the arbitrator by saying Collins had been suspend-

ed four games when he hadn't.

Collins sued the NFL, its management council and Commissioner Roger Goodell last week. The lawsuit said Collins was suspended when the new labor agreement signed in 2020 no longer allowed for suspensions over missed tests or positive marijuana tests. The league countered by saying Collins had a "long history of discipline for repeated violations."

"Clearly in a fair hearing, a fair court, with a judge like we had here, we'd win hands down," said player agent Peter Schaffer, one of Collins' representatives. "I'm humbled and honored to represent La'el. He stood up against the league knowing he was

right. The only reason he was suspended is this is how the league treats its players."

The suspension was announced the day after Dallas' 31-29 loss to defending Super Bowl champion Tampa Bay in the opener. Collins' first game since 2019. He missed all of last season because of hip surgery. Mazzant is based in Sherman, Texas, north of Dallas. Just before the start of the season four years ago, Mazzant granted star running back Ezekiel Elliott's request for an injunction to stop a six-game suspension over domestic violence allegations. That ruling sparked a two-month legal saga that ended with Elliott serving the suspension. □